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Mr. R. Cook-Deegan

Dear Bob,

Thank you for your Fax of July 9, telling me of your concern about possible ~~conflict between Japan and U.S. in connection with the genome efforts.~~ As you pointed out, I see some discrepancies or frustrations growing. Because I do not know what was talked about the Japanese efforts in the Moscow meeting, it is hard for me to trace how the distrust feelings developed. Wasn't there a Japanese fellow who could speak for us, or explain what's going on in Japan?

Jim gave me a letter telling his cancellation to visit Japan this fall, and urging us right away to raise money for HUGO (why HUGO?). Thanks for your information, this was not totally unexpected, but some parts of my plans, such as initiating a bilateral cooperation programme between Japan and U. S. (NIE) seems to have gone on deadlocks. I understand that Jim may want to see majority of the developed countries spending reasonable amounts of money on Human Genome Project.

Japanese efforts are just about to take off. Mombusho has issued an official and special recommendation to push forward the human genome efforts. The Mombusho will spend fairly large amount of money on installing new center(s), facilities and grant(s) for the genome efforts. For a time being, ¥ 300 M/y will be spent for two years while we work organizing people and doing some research. Now in Japan, beside the Mombusho, AST spends ¥ 200 M/y, and Ministry of Health and Welfare is considering to propose a budget of similar size for FY 1990. In addition, ERATO has decided to run a project on "Chromosome Research" (a tentative name) which is closely related to the genome effort. Its budget is about ¥ 2B / 5y. Yet other agencies may join in a year or two. Despite of these efforts, and despite I and my colleagues are doing our best, up until 1991 there will be unproportionately small Japanese investments on the Human Genome Efforts as compared to the US. The time lag between Western countries, particularly U. S., and Japan reflects the different roles of the Congress, the different bureaucratic systems, the different structures in scientific community and so on, as you may well aware of.

The next problem is the fund-raising for HUGO. The Japanese private industries are not likely to donate the big nomey, such as an order of ten million dollars right away. We are organizing a meeting between scientists and some businessmen. If things go well, then we will start a fund-raising machinery. The Japanese business circle will not contribute money to HUGO until they are officially approached from the HUGO. We have not been asked yet. Without following this protocol, I can see of no possibility for fund raising for HUGO, however prominent scientists cry loudly.

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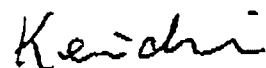
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I feel now that the most serious problem is not the lack of our efforts, but the lack of communications. It was unfortunate that I could not have been in the Moscow scene where some people were said to speak that Japan should be excluded from the coordination efforts. Scientific community can neither make progress nor have prospective future as long as they develop a sense of private club, or fail to develop mutual trust and understanding.

Perhaps, it may take sometime before the current relationship between U. S. and Japan can change. I hope that such attitudes as bashing Japan while talks are going on will be regretfully reflected in future. I must add that all the Japanese scientists appreciate the contribution by US scientists, acknowledge the efficient system in the U. S. scientific community, and are proud of having good friends in the U. S.

If I were to ask your favor now, perhaps it may be to help people understand about where the problems are. It will be helpful for me, in addition, if you could let me know the structure of the Science, Space and Technology Committee of the House of Representatives and its role in the U. S. genome efforts. Informations whether there are some other machineries in the congress related to the genome efforts will also be acknowledged.

Sincerely yours,



Kenichi Matsubara